



Wilber is top finisher in Final Election

By Yvonne M. Kaquatosh
Menominee Nation News

KESHENA, WI – Members of the Menominee Nation have made their choice in leadership for three open seats on the Menominee Tribal Legislature.

Results from the final election held last week, January 12 & 13, 2000, are as follows:

Sylvia Wilber received the top vote with 813. Incumbent Eugene 'Gene' Caldwell followed close behind with 776, while current Menominee Chair Apesanahkwat was able to secure the third place position with 682 votes. However, current incumbent and Vice-Chair, Wendell 'Sim' Askenette was unable to hang on to his seat on the Legislature. Askenette placed fourth with 661 votes, while Louis Dixon and Orman Waukau received 593 and 587 respectively.

The top three candidates will lead us in the new millenium – joining the remaining six incumbents – Lisa

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7th Annual Menominee Ice Challenge underway



L. Tucker/MNN



Let the fireworks begin! The start of the firework display, at Northern Exposures snowmobile track, brought this art carving to life, while (left) racers and guests enjoy the beauty in the sky. All firework displays were sponsored by the Menominee Casino. Another fireworks display will be held this weekend as the annual two-week event comes to a close this Sunday.

Additional photo and story on page 12

Menominee Ice challenge Weekend Schedule of Events

Thursday/Friday, Jan. 20-21, 4-7 p.m. DJ Ice Carving Competition. 12 local stations competing this year.

to be carved, by all carvers!
7 p.m.-8 p.m. Portraits. Carvers will carve your image in ice.
8 p.m. Fireworks to Explode!!!

Saturday Jan. 22, 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Ice Giant Invasion. 4,500 lbs. of ice

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Resources available to help disabled people get back to work

By Mike Wilber
Menominee Nation News

For American Indians with disabilities, life can often be like a fish living in a bowl, confined to a glass case with no possibility for life beyond.

But there is help in escaping a confined existence, getting out into the workforce and being a contributing, self-sustaining member of the community. The American Indians with Disabilities (AIWD) office, opened on Nov. 1, 1999, can help disabled persons get the equipment and reasonable accommodations for work or for education and training.

Royal Warrington, Menominee with Disabilities coordinator and director of the tribe's legislative staff, noted that Indians have the highest percentage of disabilities and are the

least likely to take advantage of disability benefits. Statistics of 1998 have shown there are 277 persons with a disability that reside in the community, but that only 35 received any direct assistance from the State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) towards employment training or assistance to go to school.

AIWD is funded by a U.S. Department of Education grant to the Great Lakes Inter Tribal Council. The Menominee Tribe has donated the office space located in the Gordon Dickie/FIC building across from the Menominee Tribal Offices in Keshena. The office services the Menominee as well as three other area tribes - Stockbridge-Munsee, Forest County Potawatomi, and Mole

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The area DVR office in Green Bay, Warrington said, didn't really know how to approach Indian people or how to deal with them. "We're citizens, not only tribal, but state and federal, and we are entitled to this," he said. With the AIWD office in Keshena, he hopes that will allow more disabled Menominee people access to benefits.

"There's a place for everyone," said Warrington, who makes use of a wheelchair himself. "We need to help them find their place."

AIWD helps to obtain adaptive equipment, such as specialized keyboards, wheelchairs, or customized vehicles, so people can remain in school or at work. They can also help in starting up a small business, among other supportive services.

Warrington and Norman Shawanokasic, the vocational rehabilitation counselor for AIWD, stress that the office does not give handouts. It is designed to help enrolled American Indians who have a plan to better themselves through work or school. Applicants complete an Individualized Plan for Employment so that Shawanokasic can know how to help them.

Since their opening on Nov. 1, they have 22 new clients who are eligible for benefits. If an applicant is found ineligible to receive AIWD benefits, the office can refer them to where they are eligible.

To be eligible for AIWD services, you must be enrolled in a Native tribe, have a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment, and be reasonably expected to benefit from the services received.

There is no income criteria to receive assistance and an eligible applicant cannot be turned down because of cost, by law.

Some examples of disabilities include: alcohol & drug addiction, blindness, spinal cord injuries, mental illness, impaired hearing, learning disability, amputation, or any other physical or mental condition that limits a persons ability to work.

Shawanokasic said that vocational rehabilitation services have gotten away from dictating what a disabled person will do and have started working with people to find out what they can do. That can help build that person's esteem and self-worth.

"Yes there is a place (for disabled people) out there," he said.

Warrington said, "Sometimes you have to plant an idea in their head to start them on a path to education and employment."

People with disabilities, Warrington said, find themselves in their own fishbowls, feeling confined to the limitations of their own situation. "The disability is the glass wall and the water the trapping of their own existence."

Though they may never fully escape their disability, people that make use of AIWD services can push those glass walls farther out to live fuller and more satisfying lives.

Contact Norman Shawanokasic, vocational rehabilitation counselor, at (715) 799-4591. Norm said he can also schedule in-home visits. Just give him a call.

ELECTION:

Waukau, Llewellyn Boyd, Barbara Kelley, Wilmer Peters, Jr., Margaret R. Snow, and James Wayka.

Only 5 votes separated two contenders in the Chief of Police election. The top finisher was Keith Tourtillott with 698 votes. Judith Duquain was hot on his heels with 693.

Judith Duquain filed a request for a recount on Tuesday, January 18, 2000.

A recount will be held on Saturday Jan. 22nd.

In a last ditch effort, incumbent Chief of Police, William 'Kuzco' Beauprey ran as a write-in for the top law enforcement post. He was unsuccessful in his bid for re-election receiving 135 votes as a write-in candidate - 180 votes less than his primary tally of 315. Approximately 30% of the tribal membership who are eligible to vote exercised their right to do so. This is an increase of 7% from the primary election held last Fall.

The majority of the voters chose to vote absentee. According to information received from Davey Jean Peters, Secretary of the Menominee Tribal Election Commission, 1,108 members requested absentee ballots. Only 845 ballots were returned. There were 234 votes tallied at the Neopit Fire Station and 584 registered in Keshena bringing the total number of ballots to 1,663.

A re-organizational meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 9, 2000 at 10:00 a.m. in the Black Hawk/Ada Deer room at the Menominee Casino-Bingo-Hotel.

SCHEDULE:

Sunday, Jan. 24, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Free Style! Carvers add to displays in free style.

2:30 p.m.- 3:30 p.m. The world's fastest ice carver. Ice carvers race against the clock.

Sunday, Jan. 24, 4 p.m. Menominee Ice Challenge ice carving awards ceremony.

All events will be held at the Menominee Casino/Bingo/Hotel in Keshena, Wisconsin.

For additional information, you may contact Al Stachura or Sharon Waukau at 799-3600.